

I work as a Video Relay Service communication assistant (Interpreter) and I would strongly suggest the FCC reconsider the 10 minute rule. When Deaf consumers sign, their style can vary greatly from individual to individual. One interpreter may understand the Deaf caller perfectly, while another feels completely lost. Forcing an interpreter to stay on a call for 10 minutes while not understanding the client is a disservice to both the caller and the interpreter. If the 10 minute rule were suspended (only under certain circumstances, such as the interpreter not understanding the caller, or a legal phone call which requires special knowledge of legal matters), it would greatly improve the service.

Another issue that effects interpreters and clients is "preconferencing." Interpreters can do a much more professional job when given the opportunity to know a bit about what will happen during a phone call. Often times proper names will come up that may be tough to catch in the 2D world of a computer monitor, so getting names and concepts ahead of time saves time as the interpreter does not have to ask for repeats of information. This is not to say that the entire content of the call be disclosed ahead of time, but even the tiniest bit helps. Just knowing a client is calling a pizza parlor gives the interpreter an idea of where the conversation is headed and they can make the Deaf caller sound sure of themselves instead of stumbling through and asking for clarifications.

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